

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Regents

From: Board Office

Subject: Approval of Honorary Degree, Iowa State University

Date: August 30, 2001

Recommended Action:

Approve Iowa State University's request to award an honorary doctorate of humane letters degree to John Ruan at Winter Commencement 2001.

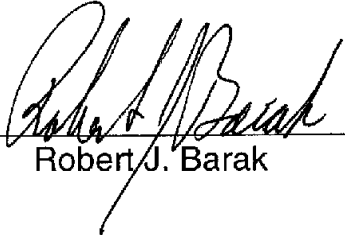
Executive Summary:

Iowa State University requests approval to award an honorary doctorate of humane letters degree to John Ruan. John Ruan is a great Iowa success story, who, in addition to making a single contribution to economic development in Iowa, also has given back to his community and enriched the world around him. ISU is making this request in recognition of John Ruan's work in leading the World Food Prize Foundation, which seeks to both publicize the challenge of feeding the world's growing population, while also publicizing dramatic advances in our capacity to grow food and fiber.

John Ruan is a man of considerable impact and influence locally, nationally, and internationally. As the Chairman and CEO of the Ruan Companies, John Ruan leads a diversified group of businesses and activities that include transportation, commercial banking, financial services, international trading, and real estate development. He has literally changed the face of our capital city, building the 36-story Ruan Center in the 1970s to house the administration of his companies, adding the 33-story Marriott Hotel in 1980 and the 14-story Two Ruan Center in 1982. He also was involved in the development and building of the Polk County Convention Center. In 1932 at age 18, he began his trucking company with one truck. Now this small business has become Ruan Transportation Management Systems, one of the nation's largest trucking operations.

John Ruan has received many awards and recognitions for his accomplishments and charitable endeavors. In 1997, the American Trucking Association dedicated the Ruan Transportation Center Building in Washington, DC, to honor his more than 50 years in the transportation industry. In 1992, the National Forum for Agriculture gave him the first annual Agricultural Vision Award for his work with the internationally known and respected World Food Prize Foundation. The Des Moines Register named him Iowa Business Leader of the Year in 1991. When General Foods withdrew its sponsorship of the World Food Prize Foundation, John Ruan assumed sponsorship, prompting the member-owned Electric Utilities of Iowa to award him the 1990 Iowa Venture Award for Distinguished Leadership, in honor of his entrepreneurial accomplishments. In 1988, the National Society of Fund Raising Executives gave him the Outstanding Philanthropist Award, and in 1986 he received the Humanitarian Award from the Variety Club of Iowa. Ruan was designated Des Moines' Citizen of the Year in 1981, and the following year he was elected to the Business Hall of Fame.

In summary, John Ruan is widely acclaimed for his business accomplishments and for his humanitarian good works. In the companies that he founded and led, he has influenced many fields of interest to Iowa State University, including transportation and logistics, finance, agronomy, and construction engineering. His sponsorship of the World Food Prize matters greatly to a university internationally recognized for its contributions to agriculture.



Robert J. Barak